1:Williams E,G-5 (1923-1925) 1930
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the ground before them. Then the waiting spearmen discharge their darts at the flying disk, seeing in imagination the wild pig flying past the hunter. This, like most native games, has no finality and no winner. Whoever lodges his mock spear in the rolling disk utters his shout of triumph—maybe his own name or that of his clan—while all rush forward to recover their weapons and form into line again for the next attempt.

A more uproarious pastime is the sham fight between two contending parties, when mock spears are thrown with great violence and evaded with great address. The spear is usually the six-feet-long stalk of a large herb weighted with its rhizome, a very solid knob, which gives power and directness to the missile and makes it worth one's while to dodge. The shield is a miniature of light palm spathe. Armed with these weapons the parties attack one another, launching their spears or parrying or dodging those of the enemy with all the cries and actions of true warfare. When the game is played by small boys, the contending parties draw closer and closer, snatching up and returning the spent weapons of their adversaries with gradually mounting spirit, until the combat thickens and may become a hand-to-hand scuffle in which the spear is turned into a club. An unlucky hit may compel one of the combatants to withdraw weeping from the fray, but one never sees bad blood engendered in these village games, however warlike, and a stand-up fight must be a very rare occurrence.

With the approach of dusk the various families of the village will forsake amusement and employment, or the lack of either, for the business of eating their evening meal. About this there is little or no formality. The housewife is responsible for the due preparation of the repast, which is the only regular one of the day. If she be a dutiful spouse she seldom fails in punctuality, for the hungry Orokaiva husband is short-tempered and any break-down in the catering of his household will cause domestic disagreement. (Indeed, it would appear that neglect of household duties may be as just and potent a cause of divorce as actual infidelity.) There will be a few friendly gifts of food. If a man

3: Reay E-4, 5 (1951) 1953 OJ23 Orokaiva OJ23

child's teeth tickled her in their tentative exploring. All these mothers laughed at the infants, with comments signifying, " He is not content to drink my milk ; he wants to eat me, too."

When the baby learns to walk, even if he is still unsteady on his feet, he ceases to be *meni orosati* and is known as *meni isapa* until he is about eight or nine years old. He stays at home with his older siblings while his mother goes to the garden, but she does not stay there all day now. She leaves the village quite early in the morning and returns to prepare a midday meal. As soon as the child is able to walk with his mother without impeding her progress, he goes to the garden with her. As he grows older, he plays with the other children in the gardens and may help his mother a little. Children of two or three years eat solid foods, mainly taro, but they still suckle. If they hang around their mother, except to approach the breast, she scolds them and makes them go away. Sometimes, if she is busy or does not want to sit down, she refuses them the breast. They go to their father, who spends much of his time sitting on the ground talking with the other men. The father takes the child between his legs, delouses his head affectionately, and holds him in his arms. It is always to the father that the child, especially the male child, runs for comfort.

The *meni isapa*, particularly at the age of two or three years, are the butt of jokes from the grown men, who frighten them by making strange noises and lungeing threateningly in their direction then laughing loudly as they watch the children cry, register bewilderment and run to their fathers. When their initial terror is overcome, the children learn to laugh at their own fright. This happens continually, until the child learns not to be afraid, imitates the men's frightening noises and grins back at them cheekily. All this is accepted by the women, who make no attempt to shield their children from experiencing such frights. If the men are her kinfolk, or friends of her husband or brother, the mother will join in with their raucous laughter. If they are strangers, she will take no notice of the incident. This frightening of small boys (*meni isapa*) is deliberate. Sometimes little girls are frightened incidentally at the same time, but no one takes much notice of this. Men do not go out of their way o frighten the little girls.

From about nine years till initiation at fifteen or sixteen, the child is known as *meni dombo*, or " big boy " (female, *meni kakara dombo*). I know very little about the *meni dombo*, either male or female. Married women among the Orokaiva are alarmed by the behaviour of the *meni kakara dombo*, who approach men casually to demand cigarettes and to talk freely about sexual matters in a joking way. This suggests that parents probably exercised more control in former times over the older children.

In Orokaiva childhood there are at least two conflict situations. At teething, the infant learns that he must not bite the mother's breast. Biting is accorded the immediate punishment of physical blows and unfeeling laughter at the child's expense. A three years old boy wanted to suckle and was kept waiting by his mother, who told him that she was busy and that he was getting too old to suckle anyway. He retaliated by biting her breast, but she hit him, scolded him and chased him away,